MEETING OF THE
LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
BOARDS OF DIRECTORS
THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2011 - 12:00 P.M.
LRGVDC TRANSPORTATION CENTER
510 PLEASANTVIEW DR. - WESLACO, TEXAS
PRESIDING: MAYOR CHRIS BOSWELL, PRESIDENT

President Chris Boswell called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. and asked Mr. Ken Jones to call roll. Upon conclusion of roll call it was ascertained that a quorum was present. With the Board's permission President Boswell moved to item 3.E. – Consider Recommendation from Site Selection Committee RE: Office Relocation and recognized Mayor Miguel Wise. Mayor Wise stated that the City of Weslaco was very proud and honored that the Site Selection Committee recommended the three Weslaco sites as the top three choices for the relocation of the LRGVDC main office. Mayor Wise then gave a presentation on the three locations the City of Weslaco proposed as the LRGVDC’s new home and the benefits of moving to Weslaco, noting the highest ranked location being the current Visitor's Center.

At the conclusion of the presentation Mayor Pro-tem Eddy Gonzalez commented that not only are the offers from Weslaco generous, but the City of Weslaco representatives were excited about making this offer to the COG and thanked Mayor Wise for their enthusiasm. Mr. Jones added that the center building of the Visitors Center has seating areas on both sides, a spacious reception area and a board room on the north side, and for the COG to be able to fully utilize those spaces for their intended purpose, the City of Weslaco has also offered at no cost, at least initially, a separate downtown location for the 9-1-1 Department.

President Boswell acknowledged how fortunate it was to receive such good proposals from so many cities throughout the region and added that the Site Selection Committee met last week to evaluate all the proposals and had the opportunity to ask follow-up questions of the Weslaco representatives. As is indicated in the RFP packet, staff ranked the proposals and the Committee agreed with the staff recommendation adding that the Weslaco Visitor's Center is a beautiful facility.

The Hon. Norma G. Garcia added that because of the experience of having a lease with a 120 day period to vacate after non-renewal or termination of the lease, she asked if the Weslaco Economic Development Corporation agreed with the City of Weslaco’s proposal. Mr. David Suarez, Weslaco EDC President stated that the EDC Board voted on this proposal and the motion passed, and added that Mr. Jones had requested a clause allowing a one year period to vacate after non-renewal/termination of the lease. Mr. Suarez stated that this EDC action will come before the Weslaco City Commission for ratification. Mr. Hernan Gonzalez, Weslaco EDC Executive Director, stated that the City of Weslaco has offered the EDC staff another venue that will be just as good, if not better, than the Visitor’s Center, and added that staff understands that the LRGVDC would like a purchase option for this facility and he is looking forward to a long term option. Mr. Gonzalez stated that “we love the LRGVDC and if we can help in any way, we are available to you”.

Commissioner Joel Quintanilla stated that for long range plans the COG needs to establish a purchase price because the COG needs a permanent home. Mayor Wise stated that all parties concerned have agreed to negotiate a purchase price. Mr. Suarez stated that the lease will be for no less than five years.
with the inclusion of a purchase price. Mayor Steve Brewer asked how much rent the 9-1-1 Department currently pays. Mr. Jones stated that currently .21 $ a square foot is direct billed to the 9-1-1 Department as well as all the LRGVDC programs. Mayor Brewer stated that the Board appreciates the offer of free space for the 9-1-1 Department, but advised caution for a potential unexpected budget cost next year due to a large rent line item. Mr. Jones stated that staff anticipated that any charge for that space would be consistent with the overall rent, and if the Board does approve the relocation to the Weslaco Visitor’s Center there is the option to construct additional space for whatever program needs it. Upon conclusion of discussion Mayor Pro-tem Eddy Gonzalez made a motion to accept the Site Selection Committee’s recommendation as presented. Commissioner Ruben Guaardo seconded the motion. Upon further discussion Mayor Pro-tem Gonzalez amended his motion to include authorizing Mr. Ken Jones, Executive Director, to negotiate terms of the lease agreement with the City of Weslaco and if needed to submit the draft lease agreement for approval and execution to the Executive Committee; Hon. Norma G. Garcia seconded the amended motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously. Upon conclusion of action President Boswell cautioned care with the budget in the next couple of years due to potential budget cuts from Austin, and advised to take time to develop a long term solution to these anticipated shortfalls.

Upon conclusion of discussion and action President Boswell moved to agenda item 2. – Consider Approval RE: February 24, 2011 Meeting Minutes. Mayor Steve Brewer made a motion for approval of the minutes as presented. Mayor Orlando Correa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Upon conclusion of action on the minutes, President Boswell moved to item 3.A. – Public Comment and recognized Ms. Amalia Flores who informed the Board of the need to return the Career Link bus route to service and/or include more routes that service the Mission area. Ms. Lydia Jeffrey was recognized next and also expressed the need for the return of the Career Link.

Upon conclusion of Public Comments the President moved to item 3.B. – Presentation RE: Childhood Obesity and the Built Environment and recognized Mr. David Irizarry, Master of Public Health Candidate at Texas A&M Health Science Center. Mr. Irizarry gave a presentation entitled “The Built Environment’s Influence on the Physical Activity of Colonia Children”. Mr. Irizarry stated that more Hispanic children are overweight and obese than non-Hispanic children, and that all children should do one hour or more of physical activity each day. The Built Environment may support physical activity by providing access to recreational facilities, street lights, safe playgrounds and having sidewalks in good condition. The conclusion of the survey was that some colonias offer a poor built environment thus limiting opportunities for children to engage in physical activity. Mr. Irizarry encouraged the Board members to fill out a questionnaire he provided and return it to him to further this study.

Upon conclusion of the presentation President Boswell moved to item 3.C. – Presentation and Consider Action on Resolution of Support RE: Reusable Bag Initiative, tabled at the February meeting. It was the consensus of the Board to leave this item on the table until the Solid Waste Advisory Committee reviewed the resolution.

President Boswell next moved to item 3.D. – Presentation RE: Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Alternative. Mr. Gilbert Ortiz was unable to attend and it was the consensus of the Board to postpone this presentation until the next meeting.
President Boswell then moved to item 4. – TRACS Report from Professional Advisory Review Panel (PARP) and recognized Mr. Oscar Cuellar. Mr. Cuellar informed the Board that the PARP met on March 9, 2011 and reviewed the following applications; the PARP recommended approval of applications 1-3.

1. RVL Texas Properties Patriot Bank – The Oasis in Port Isabel
   $8,771,463.00 .............................................................. USDA

2. County of Hidalgo Community Service Agency – The Rio Grande Valley RSBP
   $223,969.00 .............................................................. CNCS

3. Agua Special Utility District – Agua SUD Wastewater Treatment Plant & Collection Palmview
   $155,939,435.00 .............................................................. TWDB

Commissioner Joel Quintanilla made a motion to approve applications 1-3 as recommended by the PARP. Mayor Pro-tem Eddy Gonzalez seconded the motion and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Upon conclusion of action on item 4.A., President Boswell moved to item 4.B. – Consider Action RE: Proposed Amendment of 3.9405 Subchapter B Removing Requirements of COGs to submit Texas Review and Comment System (TRACS) to the Governor’s Office. Mr. Jones was recognized and informed the Board that the Office of the Governor’s State Grants Team has been eliminated through the Proposed Rules Title 1 Administration, posted on February 4, 2011 in the Texas Register. Effective March 27, 2011 this administrative rule change and the State Texas Review & Comment System will no longer exist. Therefore the LRGVDC is no longer required to review and submit comments on applications submitted for funding to state and federal agencies that affect this region. Due to this change at the State level, staff is recommending that the LRGVDC discontinue the PARP Committee process effective March 27th. However we recommend Board authorization to continue providing comments on applications at the staff level on an "as needed" basis. All comment letters will be presented at future Board meetings as a part of the Planning Department Status Report. Commissioner Celeste Sanchez made a motion to approve the staff recommendation as presented. Commissioner Roel Landa seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Upon conclusion of action the President moved to item 5. Report from Area Agency on Aging and recognized Mr. Joe Gonzalez. Mr. Gonzalez noted that the Status Reports were in the Board folders and asked if there were any questions; there being none, President Boswell moved to item 6. Report from Economic Development Department and recognized Ms. Terrie Salinas. Ms. Salinas gave the Status reports on the EDA 2nd Supplemental Grant and the Business Hurricane Information & Training Program then turned the floor over to Ms. Sharlotte Teague who gave the Monthly Status Report for the Regional Economic Adjustment Plan.

Upon conclusion of the Status Reports President Boswell moved to item 7. Report from Transportation Department. The President recognized Mr. Tom Logan for item 7.A.1. – Consider Approval RE: Transit Criminal Background Check Policy. Mr. Logan stated that the LRGVDC Transit Department was proposing a Background Check Policy requiring pre-employment criminal background checks for all prospective transit applicants offered positions at the LRGVDC. Currently LRGVDC Transit employees are not required to have criminal background checks. To ensure a safer working environment and liabilities, LRGVDC Transit Department proposed to conduct criminal background checks on all current transit employees who have not gone through the criminal background check process effective upon adoption of this policy. The Hon. Norma G. Garcia made a motion for approval of the Transit
Criminal Background Check Policy as presented. Mr. Don Medina seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.

Upon conclusion of action the President moved to item 7.A.2. – Consider Approval RE: South Padre Island MOU on a Multi Modal Station. Mr. Logan informed the Board that Valley Metro staff has been working with South Padre Island’s public transportation provider, The Wave, to plan a transit facility that would benefit the region. Staff sought approval for Mr. Ken Jones, Executive Director, to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish the rights, duties, and responsibilities of this collaborative effort in order that the project may continue to move forward. **Mr. Don Medina made a motion for approval of the South Padre Island MOU on a Multi-Modal Station as recommended. Mayor David Simmons seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.**

The President next moved to item 7.A.3. – Consider Approval RE: Termination of LeFleur Transportation Contract. Mr. Logan stated that Le Fleur Transportation currently contracts with Valley Metro to provide demand-response medical transportation trips to clients living in the Mercedes, Weslaco, Donna and Progreso areas. Under the current contract revenue generated is not enough to cover all operating costs and LeFleur is unable to increase the rate paid per trip. Staff recommends immediate termination of the contract. **Mayor Orlando Correa made a motion for approval to terminate the LeFleur Transportation contract as recommended. Mr. Don Medina seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Logan summarized the Regional Transportation Advisory Panel Status Report.

President Boswell next moved to item 8. - Report from Regional Planning & Services and recognized Ms. Marcie Oviedo. Ms. Oviedo noted that the status reports were in the folders and staff was updating the website to keep the public abreast of program activity.

President Boswell next moved to item 9.A.1. – Consider Approval RE: Accept Replacement/Appointments to the HSAC for Hidalgo and Cameron County’s Permanent Seats and recognized Mr. Manuel Cruz. Mr. Cruz informed the Board that Homeland Security Advisory Committee (HSAC) accepted committee replacements and appointments for Hidalgo and Cameron County’s permanent seats. To represent Hidalgo County Judge Ramon Garcia appointed Sheriff Guadalupe Trevino and to represent Cameron County Judge Carlos Cascos appointed Humberto Barrera, Emergency Management Coordinator. **Mr. Roberto Laredo made a motion for approval of the appointments as recommended by the HSAC. Commissioner Celeste Sanchez seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Cruz noted that the Homeland Security, Criminal Justice and Metropolitan Medical Response System Status reports were in the Board folders for review.

President Boswell next moved to item 10. – 9-1-1 Department and recognized Mr. Juan Gomez. Regarding item 10.A. – Consider Approval RE: Interlocal Agreement between LRGVDC 9-1-1 and City of Pharr, Mr. Gomez informed the Board that the purpose of this agreement is for the 9-1-1 Department to provide Geographic Information System (GIS) Web Server hosting of Pharr’s GIS Basemap. It allows for the 9-1-1 Department and the City of Pharr to cooperate in maintaining up-to-date data for city limits, street center lines, and address points. These are three basic data files utilized for 9-1-1 emergency routing and address validation purposes. **Mr. Shane Cameron made a motion for approval of the the Interlocal Agreement between LRGVDC 9-1-1 and the City of Pharr. The Hon. Norma G. Garcia seconded the motion, and upon a vote the motion carried unanimously.** Upon conclusion of action Mr. Gomez stated that the Status Reports for the 9-1-1 Department were in the Board folders for review.
The President next moved to item 11. - Regional Police Academy and Training Center and recognized Mr. Paul Williams. Mr. Williams stated that the status reports were in the Board folders and added that the City of McAllen's Police Academy has requested support from the LRGVDC Regional Police Academy to provide instruction on certain topics the Cities instructors are not qualified to teach. Mr. Williams also shared with the Board that staff will be able to provide the Active Shooter Response Course absolutely free of charge to local law enforcement; class size is limited to 25 on a first come, first served basis; additionally the FBI has scheduled a hostage negotiator course in June.

Upon conclusion of the Status Reports President Boswell moved to item 12. - Old or New Business; there being none, the President adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.

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MAYOR CHRIS BOSWELL, PRESIDENT

ATTEST:

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MAYOR PRO-TEM ALVIN SAMANO, 1ST VICE-PRESIDENT

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Deborah Morales, Recording Secretary